

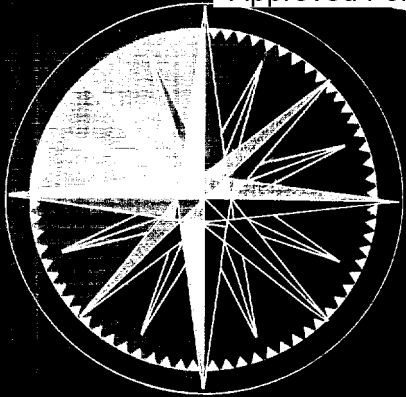
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# SPECIAL REPORT

ANOTHER ROLE FOR TSHOMBE IN THE CONGO?

State Dept. review  
completed

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY  
OFFICE OF CURRENT INTELLIGENCE

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**ANOTHER ROLE FOR TSHOMBE IN THE CONGO?**

The impending departure of UN forces from the Congo is likely to stir supporters of Moise Tshombé, ex-president of the onetime "independent" state of Katanga, into new activity. Since he went into semi-voluntary exile nearly a year ago, Tshombé has been seeking an opportunity to return to some leadership role--preferably, it would appear, in the central government at Leopoldville. He still commands broad sympathy in Katanga--although a number of political fences need mending--and he has available in neighboring Portuguese Angola the nucleus of a revamped military force. His actual moves will presumably depend not only on developments within the Congo but also on the support he gets from his erstwhile Belgian mentors, the Portuguese, and the white-dominated regions of Southern Africa.

Tshombé in Exile

Tshombé's departure from Katanga last June was greeted with relief in Leopoldville as well as in Western capitals. Although his position had been deteriorating ever since January 1963, when UN troops forcefully ended Katanga's secession, Tshombé was still something of an anti-Communist hero to a variety of groups outside the Congo, still seemed to represent stability to the Belgian and international mining interests, commanded the allegiance of a significant section of Katanga's tribal complex, and had, supposedly at his call in Angola, a heterogeneous force of "gendarmes" and mercenaries together with a small collection of light aircraft. His nuisance value thus seemed considerable, and his voluntary exodus on the pretext of a kidney ailment saved the Leopoldville government from any real test of its ability to enforce the writ it was drawing up against him.

Tshombé seems to have come quickly to the conclusion that while his departure had probably saved him from arrest, his return was essential. Within three weeks, he had written from Paris to Prime Minister Adoula requesting permission to return and offering to "explain" various compromising documents which the Congolese Government had seized in Elisabethville. A month later he again wrote Adoula, this time from Spain, promising to behave, offering to help solve the "problem" posed by the dissident Katanga gendarmes, and suggesting that he be given a responsible position in the Leopoldville regime. This theme was repeated on several occasions, and Tshombé evidently hoped that his influence over the gendarmes would guarantee him good treatment in Leopoldville. Adoula merely offered him personal assurances for his safety, however, and Tshombé has an abiding distrust of Adoula.

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In the ensuing months, the former Katangan leader, now established in Spain and surrounded by a variety of exotic hangers-on, has clung to the notion that he still has a role to play in the central Congo Government. For some time, this possibility evidently was encouraged by the Belgian Government, or at least by influential elements in it.

Spaak himself suggested to US officials that Tshombé's presence in Leopoldville would be helpful.

A New Image

Since about the beginning of this year, Tshombé (now 44) and his entourage have apparently dropped the idea that he could enter the Leopoldville regime directly through negotiations with

its present leaders, and have sought to convey an image of him as a popular, nationalist, leader, gathering forces to oppose the tired politicians in Leopoldville. At the end of January, the Belgian magazine Pourquoi Pas? published an interview in which Tshombé denied that he had anything to do with the death of the Congolese radical martyr, Patrice Lumumba. He blamed Adoula and certain members of the "Binza group" for the deed, adding that he felt like Pontius Pilate when the dying Lumumba was flown into Katanga by the central government.

Tshombé was talking of organizing a "popular front." This "front" was to include Christophe Gbenye, then head of the left-wing exile National Liberation Committee in Brazzaville, and Antoine Gizenga, the notorious sometime leader of the Lumumbist regime in Stanleyville who now is in jail, as well as a number of less radical politicians. This scheme seems to be a further development of a line that Tshombé had developed earlier, to the effect that he wanted to head a "government of national reconciliation" including Congolese politicians of all stripes.

Given the vagaries of Congolese politics, the prospect of Tshombé heading a "popular front" is not as farfetched as it might seem. He has cooperated with the "radicals" before, and neither he nor they would be likely to be restrained by ideological considerations if there were a real

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chance of getting in power. So far, however, there is no sign that this latest project has gotten off the ground, although Tshombé is said to have been in touch with the Brazzaville exiles. The success of such a scheme would depend on the assets that Tshombé could again mobilize. Some of these are still fairly impressive.

Tshombé and Katanga

Tshombé probably is still even in exile, the leading political figure in southern Katanga. His base there, however, is not as firm as a year ago, when this area was a single entity dominated by his Confederation of Associations of Katanga (CONAKAT). Since then, southern Katanga has been split into two provinces, Lualaba and East Katanga, both of which have substantial sectors of the area's mineral industry. (North Katanga, much of which was outside Tshombé's real sphere of influence, had separated earlier.) Lualaba now is the Tshombist heartland, it is the home of Tshombé's Lunda tribe, and the provincial president is a Lunda who probably would resign in Tshombé's favor if he were called upon to do so.

East Katanga, which includes Tshombé's former capital, Elisabethville, is also still strongly Tshombist in popular sentiment. However, the provincial president, Edouard Bulundwe, is a member of a smaller local tribe and shows signs of liking his job. US officials who talked

with him at the end of March received the impression that he would like to supplant Tshombé as the real political leader of this area. [redacted]

[redacted] Bulundwe hopes to split CONAKAT, leaving Tshombé's Lunda in control of the Lualaba section while he takes over the East Katangan branches. There are signs that Adoula may be encouraging Bulundwe.

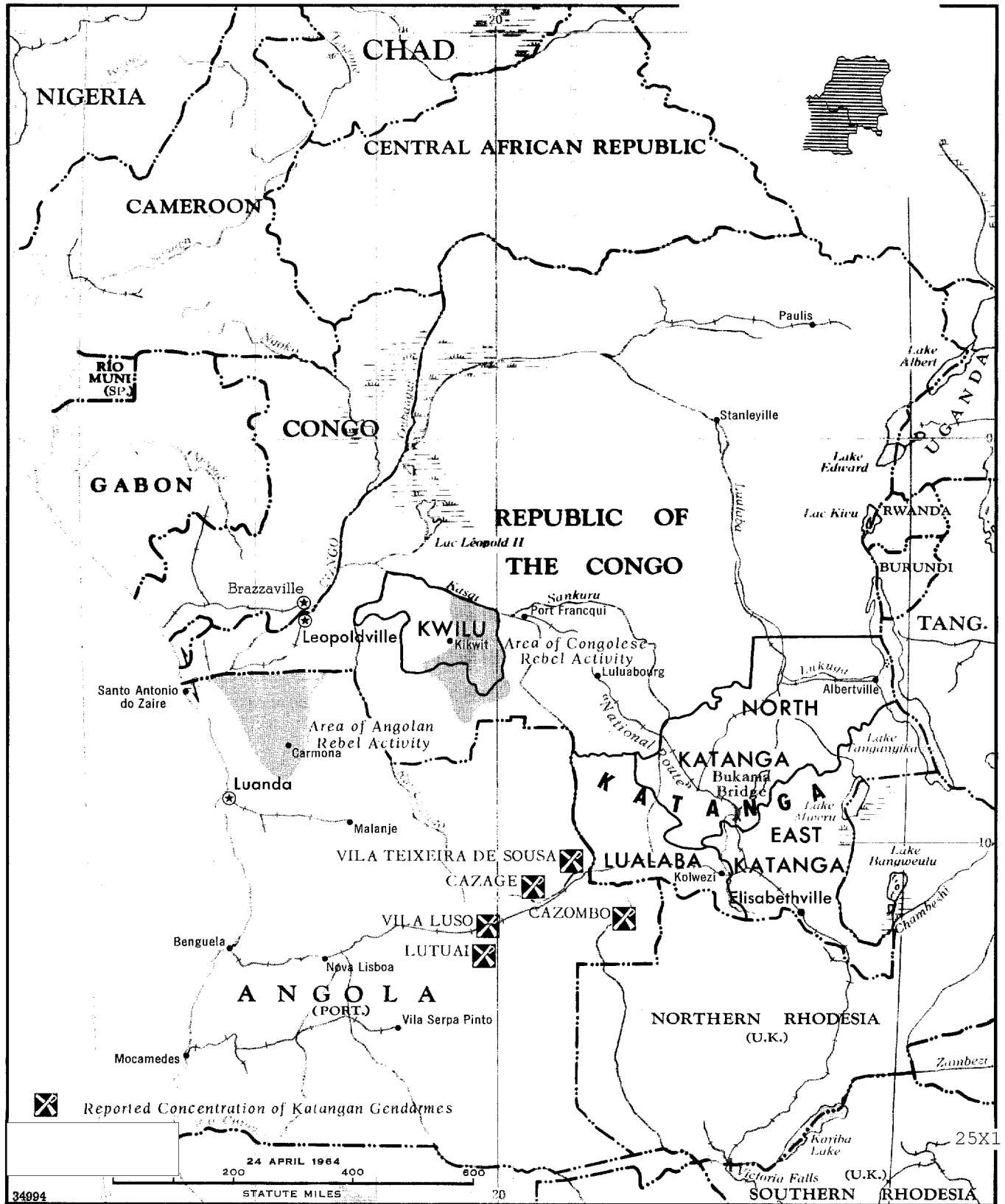
CONAKAT, a confederation of tribal associations and political groupings, has already lost much of its cohesion. The Lunda of course remain loyal to it, but many of the smaller tribes are looking for other opportunities. Godefroid Munongo, once Tshombé's right-hand man and a leader of the Yeke, another potent Katanga tribe, seems to be sitting on a fence. Evariste Kimba, once Tshombé's "foreign minister," has started a party of his own which he hopes will replace CONAKAT.

Tshombé and his partisans have not taken all this sitting down. Since mid-February, when he announced that he intended to "relaunch" CONAKAT, he has countered would-be successors maneuver for maneuver and has bombarded Katangan newspapers with pro-CONAKAT propaganda emphasizing how good the good old days were. These appeals are probably effective, since inflation and other problems since Tshombé left have lowered the Katangan standard of living.

On balance, Tshombé probably would be received with general acclamation if he returned to

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Katanga today. If he does not return in the fairly near future, however, he may find the victors, particularly in East Katanga, so well entrenched that they will not easily be pried out of office to make way for him. Elections have not been scheduled, but they may possibly be held early next year, and he almost certainly would wish to be on the scene before then. In any event, Tshombé cannot expect to maintain his influence in southern Katanga if he prolongs his stay in Spain indefinitely.

#### The Gendarmes

In January 1963, when UN military forces made their control of Katanga effective, Tshombé's own force consisted of some 12,000 "gendarmes" and 200-300 white mercenaries. This force was broken up; not more than 2,000--probably less--were integrated into the Congo National Army, several thousand dispersed into the bush throughout Katanga and into Northern Rhodesia, while about 300 gendarmes and mercenaries crossed into Portuguese Angola. Despite pleas by the central government and the UN, very few weapons were ever turned in.

During the past year, Angola has been the lodestone for many of the scattered gendarmes.

[REDACTED]

There appear to be about 3,000 gendarmes in Angola now, together with a score of white mercenaries. A substantial number of gendarmes presumably also remain in scattered groups in Katanga.

Little hard information is available about the organization and training of the gendarmes in Angola.

[REDACTED]

The gendarme refugees presumably brought at least their small arms with them, and Tshombé's brother Daniel has been in Angola trying to buy various types of vehicles

[REDACTED] There is no information, however, that these deals have gone through or that any arms have been shipped to the gendarmes.

The once-renowned "Katangan Air Force" has also found refuge in Angola. It consists of as many as 20 aircraft, mostly small propeller-driven machines, but possibly including one jet trainer type.

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The purely military usefulness of this force is problematical. To bring it to play in decisive areas of Katanga would require that it be moved several hundred miles, since it is 200 miles from the Angolan frontier to Kolwezi, the capital of Lualaba, and 250 miles more to Elisabethville. Tshombé's aircraft--assuming that they are still operable, that pilots are available, [redacted]

[redacted] could carry less than a hundred combat-loaded troops.

However, the Congo National Army in Katanga is also an unknown quantity. Many of its soldiers are prone to panic and flight, although others on occasion have given a good account of themselves. It has six battalions in the Katanga area, one of which is described as "good" by a Belgian military adviser.

Tshombé's gendarmes might under some circumstances, such as a rebellion in Katanga against the central government, be as valuable as psychological warriors as they would be as real combat elements. In any event, it is hardly conceivable that they could be used in any effective way unless Tshombé's foreign friends approved.

Foreign Support

Tshombé's supporters of longest standing are of course the Belgians, particularly those with a heavy stake in the sta-

bility and status quo in Katanga's mining industry. As long as the central government remains in "responsible" pro-Western hands and in firm control of its soldiers in Katanga, the Belgians' interest would seem best served by keeping Tshombé at arm's length. This seems to have been Brussels' policy since early December of last year, when its ambassador in Leopoldville wrote Spaak that, although he personally still favored Tshombé's return, the Katangan's followers should be given to understand that there would be no more interventions with Leopoldville on their behalf, because these created "adverse reactions."

As for private Belgian interests, particularly the Union Minière du Haut Katanga (UMHK) and its parent, the Société Générale, [redacted]

[redacted] the UMHK no longer supports Tshombé in its previous style. The UMHK still sends Tshombé, along with other Katanga politicians, some "insurance" money, but mining export taxes, the mainstay of the Tshombist regime, now are remitted to the central government. Tshombé started his exile with at least \$2.6 million; his sources of major new funds are not known.

The US consul in Elisabethville believes one of the UMHK's major concerns is the fate of the 15,000 local Belgians if Tshombé's forces staged an invasion. The Congolese Army might well turn on Tshombé's local white sympathizers. [redacted]



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[redacted] Spaak has even said he personally would consider sending a Belgian parachute battalion to western Katanga if Tshombé invades.

The Belgians having pulled in their horns, the position of the Portuguese, particularly as the custodians of the Katangan gendarme refugees, has become of first importance to Tshombé. The Benguela railway and other material interests in Angola link the Portuguese closely with Katanga, and they have therefore an interest similar to that of the Belgians in the stability of that area. Moreover, the smoldering rebellion in northern Angola is nourished, albeit meagerly, from Congolese territory with the blessing of the Leopoldville government, and the rebels have long threatened to launch a "second front," presumably from western Katanga.

The Portuguese almost certainly see in the Tshombist gendarmes at least a tool they can use for leverage on the Leopoldville government, and they would prefer to see Katanga in friendlier hands than Leopoldville's. They have repeatedly and officially denied that there are any Katangan gendarme camps in Angola; they say they are merely "refugee" camps, and deny any hostile intentions.

The attitudes of the Rhodesias, where the European-dominated government of the Federation was clearly sympathetic to Tshombé before the Federation was dissolved, now is more com-

plicated than it was. In Northern Rhodesia, Tshombé has lost influence with the consolidation of power by Prime Minister Kenneth Kaunda. In Southern Rhodesia, however, the recent change of government has brought into office an extremely conservative group of whites who will be even less reluctant than their predecessors to come to the aid of any movement which promises to keep them insulated from militant African nationalism.

Conclusion

The UN withdrawal from the Congo will present Tshombé with opportunities he has not had since he left the country nearly a year ago. Should there be new political turbulence in Leopoldville,

[redacted] Tshombé could appear either as a conservative savior of the Congo as a whole or the preserver of European interests, material and political, in Katanga. If new rebellions on the model of the current Kwilu disturbances were to tie up the Congolese Army, the Tshombist gendarme force might loom as a serious military menace.

Just how Tshombé re-enters the arena almost certainly would depend primarily on what kind of deal he could make with foreign interests. He has not always been able to discern the main chance clearly, and has often been badly advised. However, with his considerable personal charm, his experience in Congolese politics, and his friends in influential quarters in Europe, there is little doubt but that he could again become an important element in the Congo situation.

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